

as in the *Vireo* mentioned above) I suspect that the explanation is more probably a developmental accident than any recapitulation of a more primitive number of rectrices. Somadikarta (1984) stated that "Further investigations will be needed to show whether polyrectricity is caused by chromosomal anomaly". Such investigations will, of course, be difficult; it might, however, be possible to determine the genetic basis controlling rectrix number by selective breeding of a domestic species.

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Address: Dr Kenneth C. Parkes, Carnegie Museum of Natural History, 4400 Forbes Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15213, U.S.A.

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## IN BRIEF

### A NEW RECORD OF THE SICKLE-WINGED NIGHTJAR *ELEOTHREPTUS ANOMALUS* FOR SOUTHERN BRAZIL

The Sickle-winged Nightjar *Eleothreptus anomalus* is a bird of open areas, ranging from central Brazil to northeastern and eastern Argentina, including Paraguay and Uruguay. There are few recent records, and it is considered to be endangered (Bernardes *et al.* 1990, Collar *et al.* 1992). In Brazil, during the last 30 years, there are only four known records: in 1971 in Pântano Grande (Rio Grande do Sul); in 1978 at the Parque Nacional de Brasília (Distrito Federal); in 1986 at the Reserva Biológica Cambuí, municipality of Curitiba (Paraná); and in 1988 in Laranjeiras, municipality of Piraquara (Paraná) (Straube 1991, Belton 1994).

On 27 August 1994 we found a specimen in a wetland in the Fazenda Santa Rita, municipality of Palmeira, Paraná (25°18'S, 49°52'W); it had fallen to the ground with a broken wing, possibly as a consequence of collision with a power line which passed over the place at a height of approximately 10 m. The area is characterized by extense fields, and patches of *Araucaria angustifolia* (Parana Pine) forest. The specimen was collected and proved to be an adult male with developed gonads; it has been deposited in the Museu de História Natural "Capão da Imbuia", Curitiba (MHNCI 4240). An interesting aspect is that this record once again concerns a crippled individual. All the other recent records were traffic victims.

In the surroundings of the Fazenda Santa Rita, as well as in the entire state of Paraná, there has been drastic destruction of natural habitats, with total loss (e.g. in the case of agriculture), or drastic

changes as a consequence of drainage, cattle grazing or burning. In the metropolitan area of Curitiba, where all the previously known records of the species in Paraná are concentrated, the surviving natural habitats are being rapidly destroyed, mainly as a consequence of the extraction of sand from the subsoil. The habitat loss in this area may become almost complete when two dams and a road, which are planned, have been built, thus extirpating the Sickie-winged Nighthjar locally.

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Museu de História Natural  
 “Capão da Imbuia”,  
 Rua Prof. Benedito Conceição 407,  
 Curitiba, Paraná, Brazil 82810-080

MARCOS R. BORNSCHEIN  
 BIANCA L. REINERT

Sociedade de Pesquisa em Vida Selvagem e  
 Educação Ambiental (SPVS),  
 Rua Gutemberg 345,  
 Curitiba, Paraná, Brazil 80420-030

ROBERTO BÓÇON

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#### THE NEST OF BLACKISH-HEADED SPINETAIL *SYNALLAXIS TITHYS*

On 8–9 January 1995 at Tambo Negro (4°24'S, 79°51'W) in Prov. Loja, Ecuador, I found three nests of *Synallaxis tithys*, a poorly known spinetail endemic to southwestern Ecuador and adjacent northwestern Peru. These appear to be the first records of nesting in this species.

The first nest was found on 8 January in a vine tangle in the understorey of *Ceiba trichistandra*-dominated deciduous forest about 5 m above a dry streambed. My attention was first attracted to the nest by the trilled calls of an adult bird, which brought a 15 cm twig to the nest. The nest was placed between the main trunk of the tree and a low bough placed at 60° to it. The body of the nest was about 30 cm above the base of the fork and was wholly supported by the vines, and appeared to be the standard ball of sticks typical of *Synallaxis* spinetails